

ARTS TALK Colour Supplement

Number 20 June 2024

A lot of dance and a lot of photography this month. We were at the India Dance Festival and NDT in The Hague and we look forward to Birmingham Royal Ballet's visit to The Netherlands. There are two outstanding photographic exhibitions in Amsterdam by two lady photographers which we cover in depth. We also have items on the Holland Festival, Opera Zuid, Lional Shriver and the Corpus Museum in Leiden. Plus, new this month is the addition of a listing section, *Not Only, But Also* at the end of the magazine.

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L'Apesanteur #3, 2021 by Chantal Elisabeth Ariëns on show at Bildhalle in Amsterdam



Holland Festival 2024



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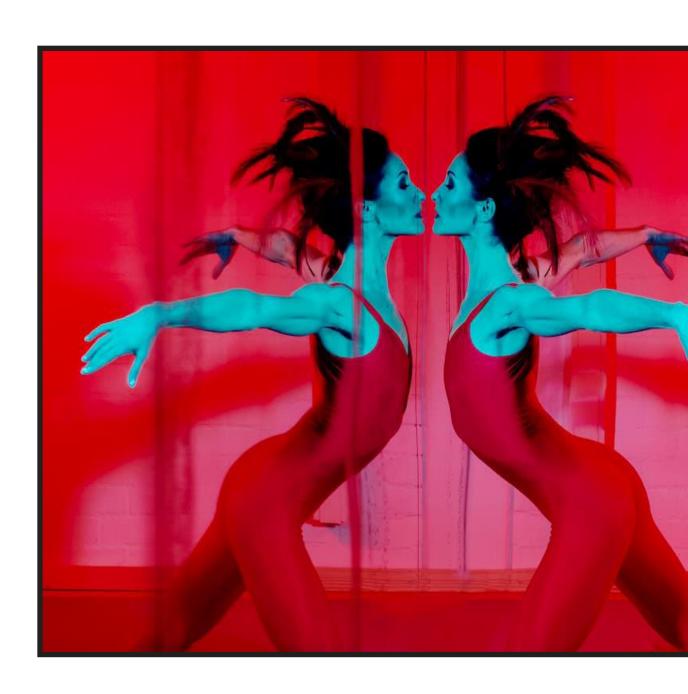
HOLLAND FESTIVAL

The 2024 Holland Festival takes place in Amsterdam from 6th to 29th June. Here are a few events that caught our eye . . .

n **PEARLS**, an enchanting fusion of dance, song and theater, the third part of the *Cosmological Gangbang* trilogy, multidisciplinary artist Joshua Serafin returns to the spiritual roots of Philippine society, before it was affected by colonial thinking about gender.

Before the arrival of the strict Catholic Spaniards in the 16th century, identity in the 'Pearl of the East' was not a matter of clearly defined contradictions. It was considered fluid and non-binary and rooted in the divine. High Priestesses embodied this gender diversity and passed it on to subsequent generations. Serafin and his fellow actors in the Philippines rewrite history and imagine a future where bodies become divine again, away from conventional gender norms.

In this way, *Pearls* wants to be more than a performance, but rather a ritual of healing. The three performers (Serafin on stage and the two other performers via a live connection) share the pain they experience as queer and trans people with brown bodies. They know how to transform their stories of trauma into scenes of unprecedented beauty, just as oysters can do by covering a strange and abrasive particle with layers until it becomes a beautiful pearl.





The National Ballet presents two of the most successful and imaginative ballets by the most important classical ballet choreographer of our time, Alexei Ratmansky. Stravinsky's *Fairy Tales* consists of his dazzling *Firebird* and the European premiere of the poetic *THE FAIRY'S KISS* - both set to the masterful music of Igor Stravinsky.

The Fairy's Kiss, written in 1928 under the French title Le baiser de la fée for Les Ballets Russes, is based on Hans Christian Andersen's The IJsjonkvrouw. A boy is saved by a fairy's kiss during a snowstorm. He grows up to be a handsome young man, but on the night before his wedding the fairy returns to claim him, sealing his fate with an icy kiss.

The legend of the firebird, the starting point for Stravinsky's *Firebird* from 1910, tells the story of the Tsar's son Ivan who catches a firebird in a magical garden. After it manages to break free, Ivan receives a feather from her that will save him in need.

Ratmansky has translated both stories into dance in an extremely idiosyncratic way. In Ratmansky's hands, *The Fairy's Kiss* — with beautiful sets and costumes by Jérôme Kaplan — grows into a moving story about a choreographer who cannot escape his fate. His passionate *Firebird* jumps off the stage, with the firebird also symbolizing a force of nature from which you cannot easily escape.

With nothing more than a simple shovel in his hands, Canadian artist Victor Pilon moves tons of sand for 12 days, 6 days a week, 6 hours a day. **SISYPHE** generates its own location-specific soundscape, with songs from the Montreal band Dear Criminals.

This performance marathon is inspired by the famous essay *The Myth of Sisyphus* by Albert Camus, the French 'philosopher of the absurd'. Camus sees the punishment of Sisyphus, who is sentenced by the gods to push a heavy stone up a steep mountain for eternity, as a metaphor for human existence. In order to continue living, you must accept that existence is absurd. In a physical, emotional and mental tour de force, Pilon invites the viewer to witness his monotonous physical struggle and to reflect together on the essence of existence. Pilon, influenced by important



figures in performance art such as Marina Abramović, makes his presence the central subject of the action: enduring fatigue and pain, while remaining vulnerable.

'The tragic death of my partner Sylvain brought me to this project. We all have to mourn the absurdity of life in order to achieve some form of freedom, even happiness. As in the popular expression 'work work work', Sisyphus pushes his boulder day after day to the top of a mountain, from where it always comes back down. This project is an attempt to understand the eternal restart, to grasp the absurdity of existence, a desire for clarity, a search for the why that resides in all of us.' Victor Pilon



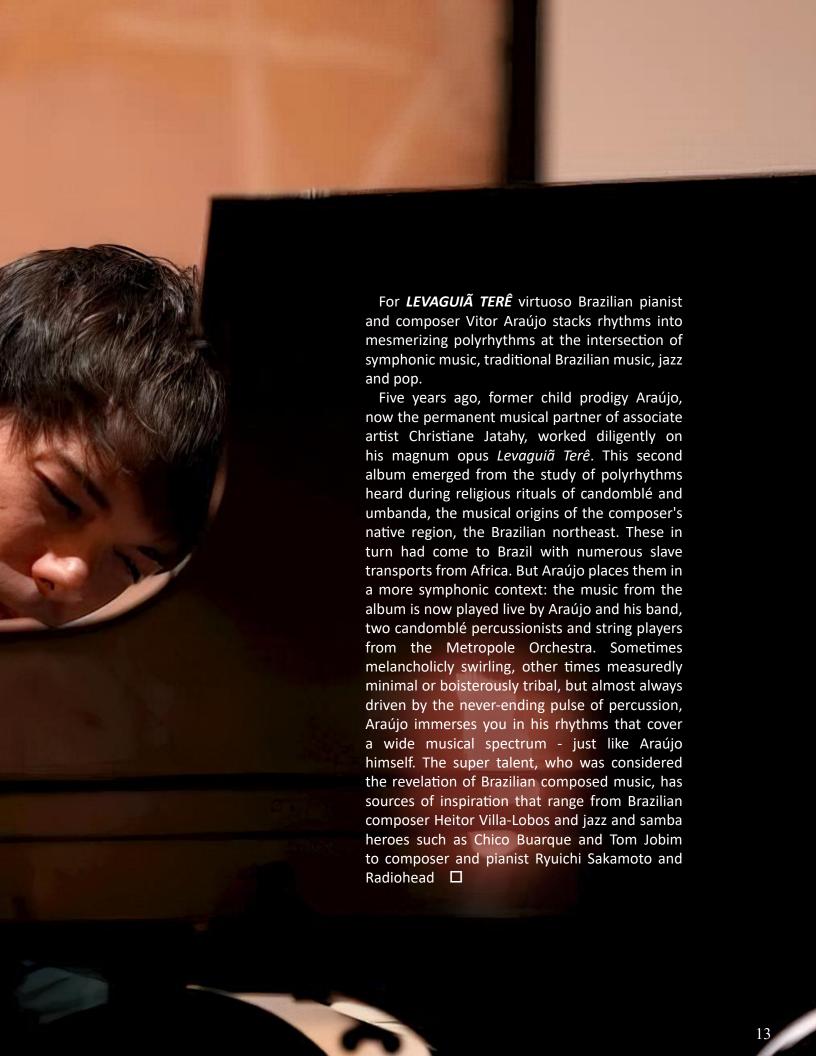


How do vodou, urban dance and experimental film influence a production process? With *THE DIVINE CYPHER* Afro-Brazilian choreographer, dancer and visual artist Ana Pi enters into a dialogue with the 20th century avantgarde filmmaker Maya Deren and her mentor Katherine Dunham, the 'queen mother' of black dance.

Deren and Dunham spent years researching dance culture in Haiti, which meant a radical turn in their artistic practice. For Deren, it resulted in a new way of thinking about the relationship between the body and the camera, a book and hours of recordings. For Dunham, it meant creating a dance technique that would change the future of choreography.

In a dreamed and danced conversation with Deren and Dunham, Pi looks in *The Divine Cypher* at how those sources resonate and what remains of these sacred ritual dances today. What movements have been preserved as part of current dances? The circular Haitian dances are reflected in the cyphers, the battleground within a circle, of the street dance. And so, in this beautiful solo, Ana Pi interweaves the sacred and the everyday, tradition with the present, and collective with individual memories.







Janette Beckman



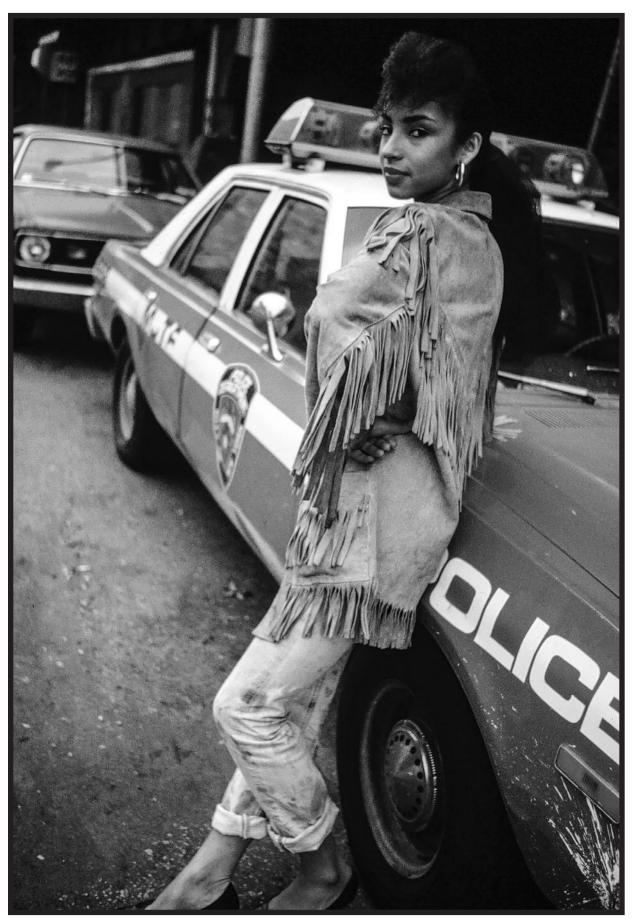
at Foam in Amsterdam

Janette Beckman (b. 1959) is an iconic British American punk and hip-hop photographer currently residing in New York. She is known for her work on subcultures. Over the years her work has received international recognition and has even entered the permanent collection of prestigious institutions such as the British National Portrait Gallery. In her early career Beckman worked for influential music magazines capturing the biggest artists of that time. More recently she has photographed for big clients, such as the Gucci x Dapper Dan shoot for *Interview Magazine*, whilst continuing her work by documenting today's emerging subcultures. The exhibition *Rebels* is Beckman's first large scale retrospective.

With a photographic career stretching over four decades she documented pivotal underground movements from the early stages of the punk and hip-hop scene to recent movements like Black Lives Matter. The exhibition sheds light on themes such as social justice, political activism and youth culture.

Rebels serves as a tribute to some of the most important social movements and subcultures of recent decades and includes a mix of images, contact sheets and vinyl covers. Beyond her contribution to music cultures, the exhibition pays homage to rebels who challenge social and political norms showcasing her photographs of recent movements such as Black Lives Matter, Anti-Trump protests and peace demonstrations for Gaza. Beckman's commitment to capture the subversives, revolutionaries and provocateurs highlights the broader social impact of her work. Furthermore, the exhibition explores how Beckman's photographs have influenced brands, highlighting her campaigns for renowned brands such as Dior, Kangol and the shoot for Gucci x Dapper Dan

Janette Beckman's Rebels continues at Foam until 8th September



Sade New York City 1983

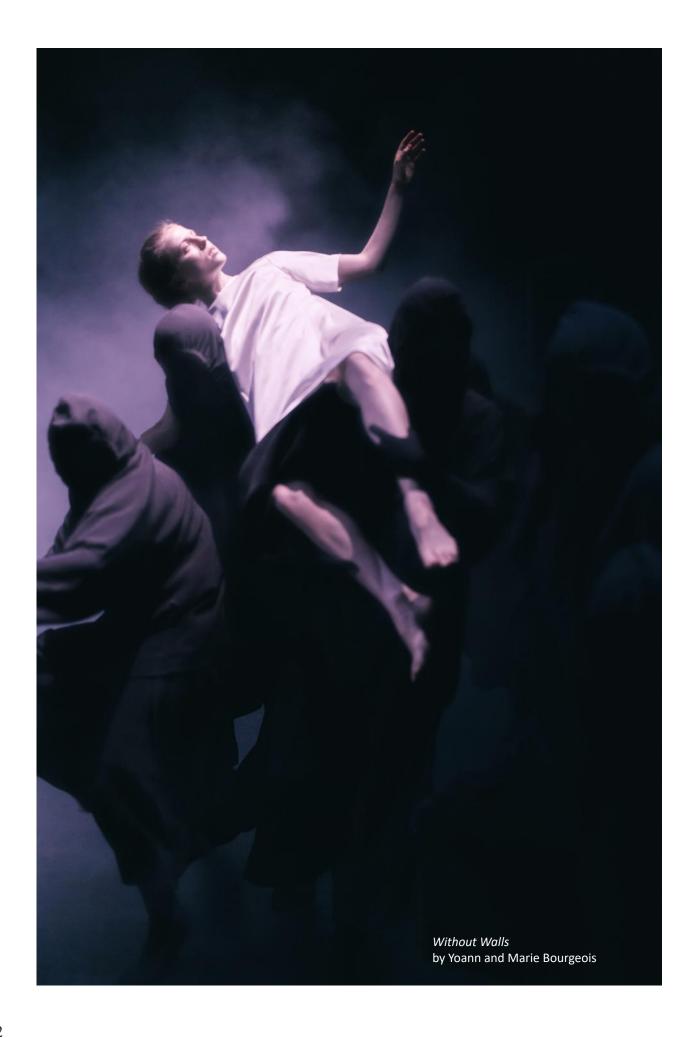






The two beautiful cello and piano sonatas by Brahms provided the sound track to a piece for three girls and two boys





Without Walls is the third piece created for NDT by Yoann Bourgeois with his partner Marie Bourgeois and is a tour de force of imagination and presentation. This, like his previous offering, Little Song, was much more than dance and included circus skills, theatrical special effects and lots more besides.

The curtain rises on a dark stage with smoke swirling around. Centre stage is a bed with nice white sheets and an incumbent sleeper. As our eyes become accustomed to the dark we see the bed and the other bits of furniture are slowly moving in a circle.

This was like an old horror film, Edgar Allan Poe or similar, a feeling confirmed by the appearance of a mysterious group of black cloaked and hooded figures, almost like monks. But this impression was contradicted by the music by Georgs Pelēcis, Arnold Schönberg and of course, Philip Glass, which was very laid back, soothing almost - and it was nice to have live musicians in the pit for a change.

One wasn't sure if the sleeper, progressively joined by others in long white cotton nightdresses were threatened or conducting some sort of strange ritual and when they started flying around, à la Peter Pan, another dimension was added. But fundamental to the production was the revolve which turned constantly, at different speeds, in the centre of the stage. It provided an ever changing perspective of events and at times was like a fairground ride with the dancers having to lean back to avoid being flung off. Without Walls is a feast of visual effects and imagination. It demonstrated that contemporary dance can be the portal to powerful and exciting theatre.

Crystal Pite is one of the stalwarts of NDT and although her *Solo Echo* was first produced twelve years ago, I had not seen it before. This was an altogether different kettle of fish, more laid back and more sophisticated. Ms Pite was inspired by a sentence from *Line for Winter* by the American poet Mark Strand: "Tell yourself, in that final flowing of cold through your limbs, that you love what you are."

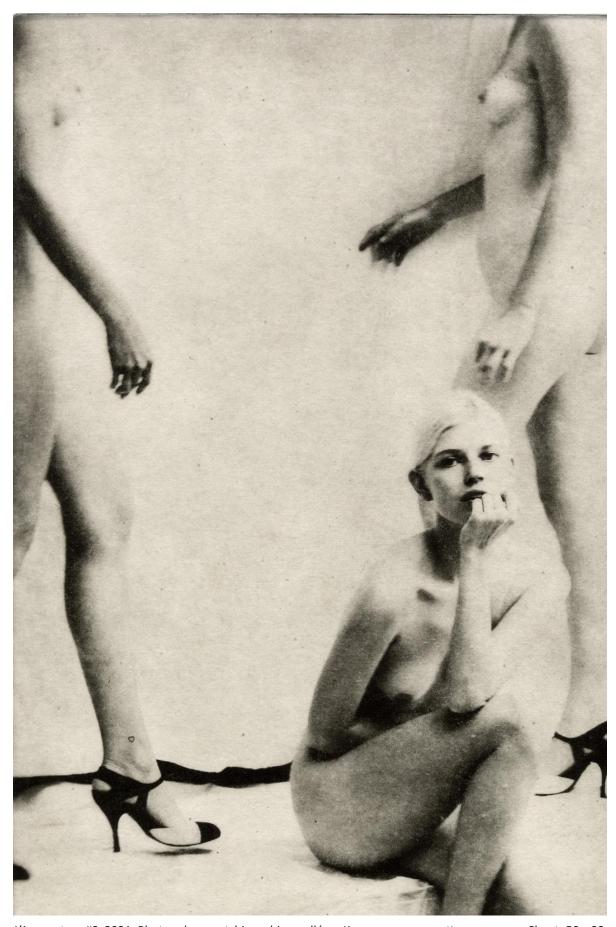
We were back inside the ubiquitous black box but at the back of the stage was a horizontal shaft of light through which snow was steadily falling. The two beautiful cello and piano sonatas by Brahms provided the sound track to a piece for three girls and two boys. Much of the piece was made up of duets exquisitely executed. By the end the swirling snow was falling the entire height of the stage and provided a dramatic background for the final dénouement.

The evening ended with the amazing Horses by Marcos Morau. For this we were back in the realms of weirdness, surrealism almost. The curtain slowly and surreptitiously rose during the interval, revealing an empty stage devoid of any décor. On the back wall and in the wings were odd pieces of stage equipment lights, cables etc and flight cases stacked on the bare back wall. The action started while the audience was still taking their seats after the interval when a young man with long blond hair wandered onto the stage. He rolled around, looked at the people in the front rows making themselves comfortable until another guy appeared with a torch, ran across the stage grabbing the first guy's wig as he disappeared stage right. This is Marcos Morau's second work for NDT, the first being Folkå in 2021. With Horses he has created a bizarre environment inhabited by people in grey suits and white shirts. The action revolved around three giant lights on the end of curved poles. I guess they were street lamps but they were more like alien beings striving to take control in a world of turmoil and uncertainty. Tom Visser's atmospheric lighting for this was, as all ways, brilliant and added immeasurably to the piece as did the soundtrack by, among others, Andrzej Panufnik. Powerful stuff

Chantal Elisabeth Ariëns White and motor at Bildhalle in Amsterdam

ArtsTalk Magazine's Anja HERRMANN was at the opening of the exhibition and in an exclusive interview for the *Colour Supplement* talked at length with the artist.





L'Apesanteur #3, 2021. Photopolymer etching, chine-collé on Kozo paper over cotton rag paper. Sheet: 50 x 33 cm. Image: 41 x 27 cm. Edition of 7 + 2 artist's proof

ow did you think of the title, Where Are You, and how did this exhibition come together?

I didn't have the title right away. Where Are You is the title of my first series. We decided to give my first solo exhibition this title. Where Are You refers to the one we lost, but also questions the self and eventually the viewer. I also did not have the final outcome of the exhibition in mind. It was a long process which started first by letting go of concepts.

Previously, I was working intensely as a photographer for clients and magazines until one day I felt I needed a change. I really felt the need to work more authentically, from the inside. So I started to experiment and I gave myself only one goal which was to let go; to work totally free, which was quite difficult especially if you're used to working with concepts [with a set agenda].

I eventually started to work with Marijn, whom I knew. I was aware she had a background in dancing. "I would love to photograph you," I told her. "With my background and you with your background, let's see what will happen." We then began to photograph in a very free way.

Beside that I was also photographing landscapes. I was photographing different things, actually. At some point later, I put all the images in my house on the ground and I could feel that I was discovering my own concept.

What was important at that moment, however, was when I showed one of these photographs of the ballet dancer to my parents. They both asked, "Why didn't we see this image before?" They were annoyed, I could feel that they were . . . "What do you mean?" I replied. "Why are you asking me this? You don't know this girl." "What do you mean, you don't know this girl?" my parents replied. They had thought it was my sister but my sister died, however. It was a very strange moment.

When I saw all the images that I was working on, it was clear to me. I became aware of the connection between Marijn and me. I observed the landscapes with a lot of emptiness. I saw the images of Marijn running vaguely which reminded me of my sister. I realized it had all to do with my own process. The process of grief, of pain, of letting go.

This took quite some time to realize. This was not done in a week, nor a month.

This took some years?

Yes, some years. And at the same time, I felt the need to work with my hands. I felt the need to make prints by myself. Before this point I did everything digital, my work went to my computer, to my client and I really felt the need to feel my own prints, to see and to produce them myself.

I saw an image somewhere in a museum and I felt very attracted to the photopolymer print due to the imperfection of the quality. There were spots all over and you could visibly see the ink. You could feel its tactility. I was really in love with it so I started to work on this technique which someday also came together (with my images) and there I saw something growing. I saw images that had meaning to me.

In a totally different way than I was photographing before, it was now really becoming more personal. I went on with this, connecting also more to each other and I started to work more freely, then later with nudity. You first captured Marijn, the dancer, and then you went on to capture the landscapes. How did they come into your work?

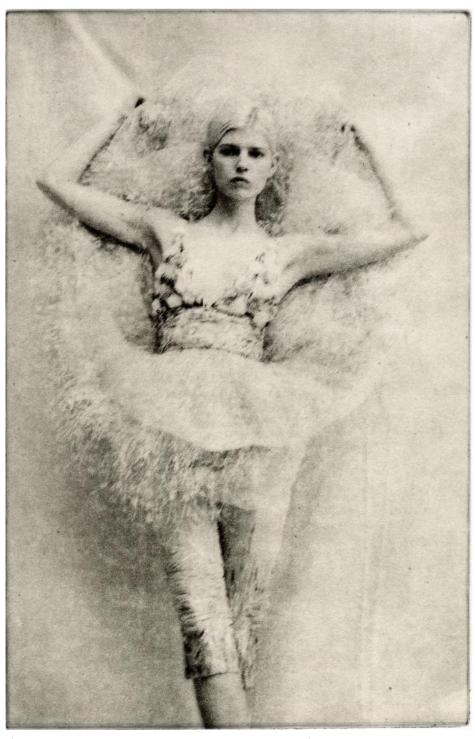
I was still working for clients and one magazine allowed me to travel in-depth. I wanted to go to Tibet, Japan, the Himalayas and Buddhist countries and I was able to do that for them. So there, also, this was important for my process as well. To do this in-depth travel, to travel with locals. It also brought me more to myself [to my own concept]. There were several different paths that brought me to where I am now.

Can you elaborate how the process was in terms of making the photograph? Do all of them use the photopolymer technique, etching technique?

Now, in the gallery, we chose to make some images big which I couldn't do with the polymer technique. So we processed it. These are my etchings but I made scans of them and translated these into archival pigment prints. Since the photopolymer technique is very slow it also brings me more to the inside [to myself]. I can







L'Apesanteur #1, 2021 Photopolymer etching, chine-collé on Kozo paper over cotton rag paper. Sheet: 50 x 33 cm. Image: 41 x 27 cm. Edition of 7 + 2 artist's proof.

be working on the plates for hours and hours. For days, even.

How long does it take to make one?

It depends on the image. Sometimes, if you want to do it really technical, you make plates. You can do it in a day but personally, I can't. I often make more plates or combine plates or I make them again and again over and over until I achieve the tactility or feeling I am looking for.

For example, if you look at *Where Are You #31*, the image where the model is lying down. I did this one over and over again. I used many plates until I got this really black feeling. This is also a process that brings quietness as you have to take time for this. You cannot be in a hurry.

You were once a dancer but you did not complete your classical training. Do you still dance now? Or contemplate dancing, possibly?

No, I don't dance at all but I was raised, I would say, at the ballet academy for eight years. I was always studying ballet. I was not a ballet dancer [professionally] but it was my dream. Unfortunately, I could not finish my studies. I did some contemporary dance with Dancers Collective. It was more Pina Bausch, experimental. I also worked with the opera. It was all a very nice experience but it was not what I was dreaming of as a child. It became a quest then to find something that could replace my passion for dance which became photography.

What made you interested in ballet in the first place when you were a child? Why was it your dream?

My parents were very creative. My mother was an artist. My father was a photographer and a teacher of the medium so I was raised also in a very creative and artistic way. When I was younger my mother took me to see the *Nutcracker* and *Giselle* when I was small and I fell in love with it. I realized this is what I wanted to

be, a ballet dancer.

You already answered this very briefly. You chose photography as your outlet in the end. Why not painting or theater, for example?

My father was a photographer so I was so used to seeing him photographing. He taught my sister and I how to work in the darkroom and produce our own prints. Before going into photography I did some modeling work and there I thought, "oh, this is also very nice to work with models and to additionally direct." I then started to assist photographers and then someday I thought, "OK, now I can do this myself."

In the process of reaching this stage, the outcome that we see here, was it very much vivid in your mind before starting? Or really was it a process? An improvisation?

It's totally improvisation. It's improvisation but as much as possible from within; involving my feelings and my models' feelings, in order to feel touched by the image.

I didn't think about it before. I only consider access to a good make-up artist and a stylist [for the dancers] and a perfect location. Location is very, very important. And when the ingredients are good, then we can play (then we can improvise).

I really like to make the set, if it's possible, more in a small team. I really like to give the girls more freedom and trust so that they can be themselves. With the camera I ask them really just to move in their own way; just be in your own world, to be really yourself. It becomes interesting then to see what's happening and I really like capturing this process together.

I like to photograph and see what happens. For example, in *Healing or Drowning* which are images I made underwater. I made this during Covid times which was of course a difficult period for everybody. In the course of the pandemic I also felt so uncomfortable. I was really longing for a feeling of comfort, warmth, a kind of nurturing feeling. As I was thinking about this

I asked "how can I translate this? How can I translate this feeling [into photography]?" Then I thought, "OK, a warm bath is nurturing so the water can be nurturing." I didn't think about what images (the final outcome of the images). I then thought, "OK, I would like to photograph in the water but really in a natural and intimate way. In natural water, (not in a bath)."

I then met a girl. We didn't know each other. I first spoke about this idea with a friend and she mentioned that she knew a girl who is very close to herself. But I said, she has to be naked in the water because I want it to be as natural as possible, not with a fancy bikini, really as natural as possible, also very in a spiritual way. And then my friend said, "Oh, but I know somebody, she's working with yoga."

And I called it *Healing or Drowning*. Because for me it was healing. It was that healing feeling of being nurtured by water. And giving over to whatever it is. So that's the way I work...

I read that in your process you 'paint' with your hands?

People think I paint but it's not completely correct. It's all made with the ink on a metal plate. There is a light sensitive layer on top. You use very strong UV light. First, I make a transparency on this layer then with a very strong UV light which sort of burns in this layer. Then in the dark room I wash away the layer and then it is what you get at the end. You get this plate that I work with and apply ink to. I roll the plate with ink and then comes this part with my hands. I wipe the plate so the ink goes away until there is only a very thin layer of ink. But of course, you can play with it: Leave ink or take more away. I can make it mine with my hands and see what comes out. That's also why it sometimes takes so much time to get the print that I want to make.

It takes a few tries, I imagine?

Several.. It takes a lot of trials. There are so many variations. There are so many different papers. It's all an experiment.

Have you tried with colour?

I'm now really experimenting with four colour prints which is quite a challenge. I use cyan, magenta, yellow and black. I have to make four plates and then put them all. So print one plate, then the next plate on top, print. Then the next plate, print. So we have four layers. Which is really difficult.

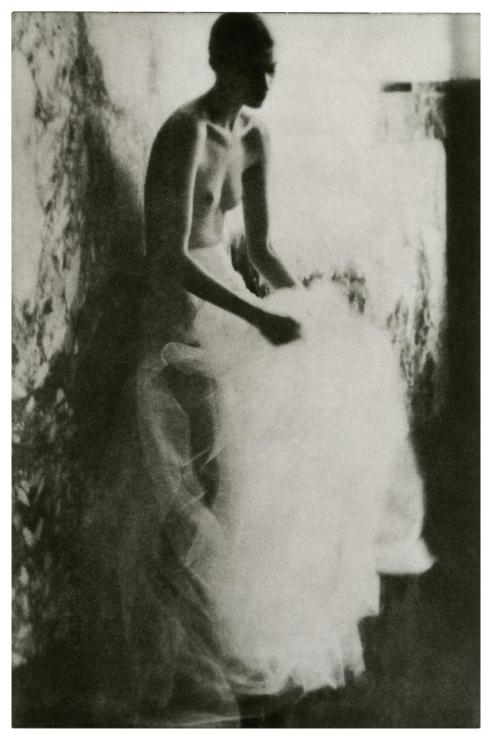
I'm really now in a process of learning about colours, how the colours communicate with each other, how the colours breathe; how they merge with each other. For me that's a wonderful process. So I do that now in the background. It's not yet officially open (to the public), I would say. I'm still experimenting. I brought out one in this exhibition which is the first colour image (Reverie #6).

Do you plan to continue with this exhibition in the future? With already the models and the ballet dancers? Or is it, as you mentioned, more with colour now?

No, I will go on with this. I go on with this because I think with black, it's never boring. There are so many possibilities. And it can be richer and richer. Last year I went to Italy to learn to work with copper plates. With copper - it's the earliest form of photogravure. And it's a very pure technique. You don't have this light-sensitive layer, which comes from Japan. The technique is very, very intense. And you have to work with aqua tint.

It's working more with graphics as well and I really, really love that because I can make my work even more in-depth. I get a more in-depth feeling. On the copper plate you can work in a graphic way like Rembrandt worked with tools on the plate. I really feel that it can bring me further and give more depth to the images so that's what I will go on with. I will go on as well with the colors. I don't plan what I'm going to do, I really try to stick to myself instead

Chantal Elisabeth Ariëns Where Are You continues at Bildhalle in Amsterdam until 20th July



Reverie #3, 2023 Photopolymer etching on cotton rag paper Sheet: 50 x 33 cm. Image: 41 x 27 cm. Edition of 7 + 2 artist's proof





Birmingham Royal Ballet appears at the Nieuwe Luxor Theater in Rotterdam as part of the Holland Dance Festival



evelopments in the field of dance take place all over the world and sometimes come from unexpected places. As part of Holland Dance Festival's mission to make interesting, international dance productions and dance artists visible in The Netherlands, the Festival is always looking for performances that add something special. Following on from the successful Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in 2019 and the internationally celebrated Acosta Danza in 2023, this year, in collaboration with Droom en Daad, the Festival will present the Birmingham Royal Ballet's *Black Sabbath*. Carlos Acosta is turning up the volume on Birmingham's musical legacy. Original Heavy Metal heroes, Black Sabbath, provide the soundtrack for *Black Sabbath – The Ballet*.

Black Sabbath forged their unique sound in Birmingham Royal Ballet's home city. In *Black Sabbath – The Ballet* expect a spectacular theatrical evening featuring thrilling dance alongside full orchestrations of legendary Black Sabbath tracks such as *Paranoid* and *Iron Man*, as well as new orchestral works inspired by their music – all performed live by Sinfonia Rotterdam.

Photos John Persson



In the second of three Birmingham-focussed commissions, Carlos Acosta was drawn to both the band's work and its musical legacy as the originators of Heavy Metal. This full-evening ballet promises to be a unique undertaking with three composers and three choreographers, led by renowned Pontus Lidberg (whose work has been performed by the Swedish Royal Ballet and the Paris Opera Ballet) and composer Chris Austin (whose work includes orchestrating the White Stripes music for Wayne McGregor's Chroma) working alongside award-winning writer Richard Thomas (Jerry Springer, The Opera) to create an extraordinary metal symphony over three acts. Black Sabbath themselves have been closely involved in developing this unique collaboration.

Sparks will fly in this intriguing new response to Black Sabbath's music and legacy – the first true heavy metal ballet experience

Black Sabbath – The Ballet can be seen exclusively at the Luxor Theater in Rotterdam from 12th to 15th June.





LIONEL SHRIVER

was at the John Adams Institute in Amsterdam to discuss her new book, *Mania*. ArtsTalk's Eva LAKEMAN was there . . .

If you were to type Lionel Shriver into the Google search bar, you'd likely find her synonymous with the term "American Contrarian." Even the John Adams Institute in Amsterdam promoted their interview discussing her latest book *Mania* (2024) by conspicuously brandishing *Lionel Shriver, American Contrarian* in big, black lettering on the top of their page. Shriver acquired this label by going against the herd, by boo-ing rather than bleating.

In her quiet hours, Schriver admits that she doesn't identify with the term though she does recognise its commercial appeal — there's no denying that her distinguished title has played a significant role in driving her steady sales. Her provocative novels, wrought with sharp social commentary, grapple with recurring motifs of family dynamics, societal issues, and the human condition which her new novel definitely doesn't shy from.

The premise of her latest book, *Mania*, raises the question "What if calling someone stupid was illegal?" Initially, the question may seem absurd, especially when posed by an opponent of "woke" culture, yet upon deeper examination, the question doesn't fall too far from the fabric of our present society. In 2022, the Elimination of Harmful Language Initiative at Standford University released a list of potentially harmful words

alongside a list of non-threatening words that students and staff should consider using instead. For example, the list considers using the word "boring," in place of "stupid" – a word that couldn't paint a more disparate picture of Lionel Shriver.

Tracy Metz, the director of the John Adams Institute, introduced the controversial character to the audience as a "fierce and fearless" writer, brave enough to tackle the subjects that everybody, whole-heartedly, tries to avoid. The interview was a raucous discussion on moral panic that fuelled laughter, as well as exclamations of distaste from the eagle-eyed crowd who hung on to every word. These opposing responses mirrored the contentious persona that is Lionel Shriver.

"Content Warning: This website contains language that is offensive or harmful. Please engage with this website at your own pace," alerts the reader in the documentImentionedabove.Perhaps, atrigger warning should be placed beneath *Lionel Shriver, American Contrarian* too, so that readers are forewarned about Shriver's fierce and fearless intelligence.

While there may be several things that one could find at fault, it's undeniable that Lional Shriver is a woman of unwavering self-assurance — an increasingly rare trait in today's world, especially given the complexities and uncertainties we all face \Box

Cloud Messenger

at the INDIA DANCE FESTIVAL at Korzo Theater in The Hague

Text by Michael HASTED Photos by Emi BARENDSE

or the hippy and post-hippy generations a pilgrimage to India was almost *de rigueur*. Kaftans and beads were for sale in Chelsea's Kings Road boutiques, as I'm sure they were in Amsterdam, and the sweet smell of joss sticks pervaded the air. I was never a hippy and I never went to India but I have always had a love of Indian music - I once spent two hours alone with Ravi Shankar while he did his daily practise, but that's another story. My point is that the India Dance Festival is something to which I particularly look forward and this year's opening performance of *Cloud Messenger* at The Hague's Korzo theatre did not disappoint.





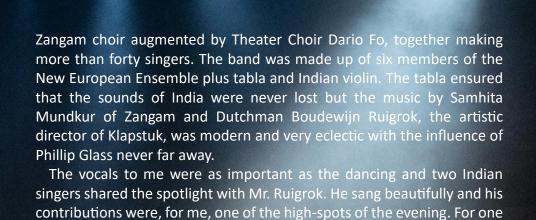


This was a big production by any standard and certainly the biggest I have seen at the Korzo with sixty artists on stage and an extra fifty seats on the side of the playing area to accommodate the huge demand for tickets. And, as you would expect, there were a lot of people and organizations involved in the production. Basically it is Klapstuk in coproduction with Korzo and was developed in collaboration with Zangam with financial support from numerous bodies.

But what of *Cloud Messenger* itself? Billed as "a contemporary, interdisciplinary music and dance performance at the intersection of Indian and Western traditions" it was inspired by the fifth-century poem Meghaduta by Kalidasa, one of India's greatest writers. It is basically the story of two separated lovers who use the clouds as a . . . err . . . messenger to carry their billets-doux to each other.

The show started with the artists slowly circling the stage before taking up their places. The majority of them were the singers of the Indian





Indian but with a very modern interpretation.

If I was asked to describe *Cloud Messenger* in one word it would be "exhilarating". Oh, and superb. Two words, exhilarating and superb

passage the tabla player even had a song. The dancing was unmistakably



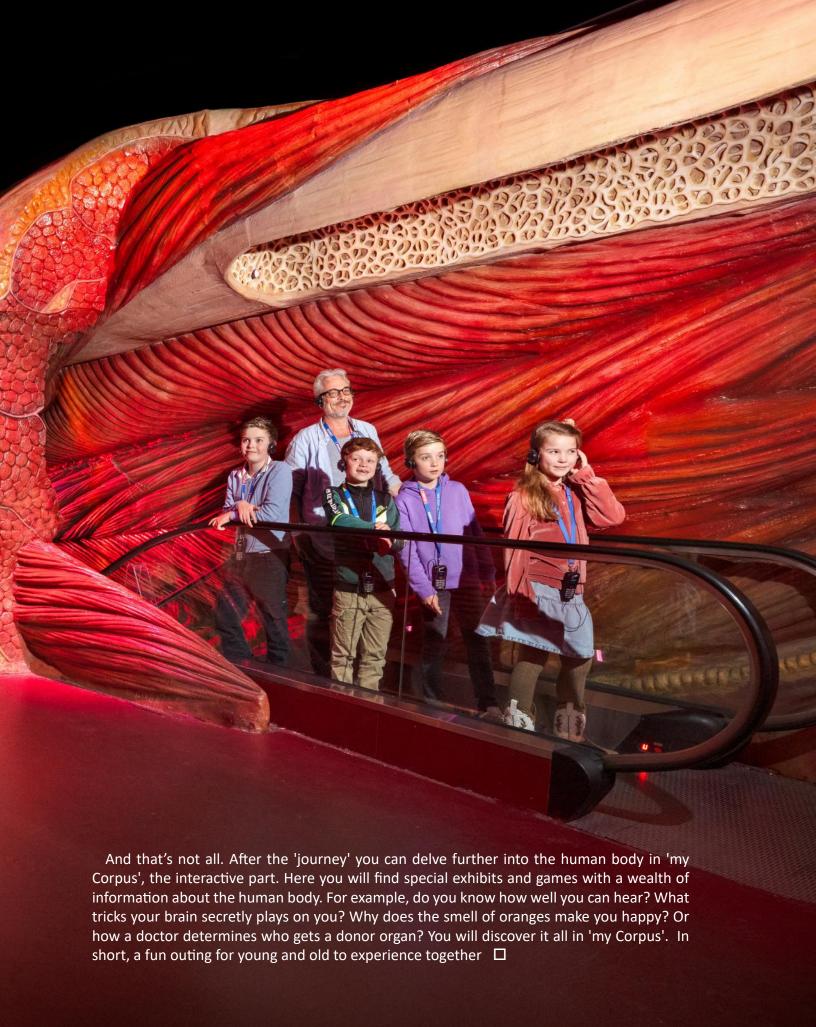
















at Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ in Amsterdam



t The Spot Where I Find Myself provides an intimate glimpse into the world of performer Genevieve Murphy. She plays an indecisive woman who slowly becomes aware of her body and the space around her. A collection of memories, identities and projections connects with the audience. At the Muziekgebouw, Geneviève performed At The spot Where I Find Myself together with a great band of top musicians such as Andy Moor, John Dikeman, Laura Polence and Henning Luther. Together they create a unique mix of concert and performance, in which spoken word, visual art, rock, free improvisation and electronic music come together.

Genevieve challenges the people in the audience to explore their own safe places, places where they can express your emotions, find protection and disappear for a while. Uncomfortable, disturbing, introverted, delicate and humorous at the same time.

Genevieve Murphy said, 'As a soloist I perform the story of my piece. Having to hold an instrument myself turned out to be disruptive to the intense physical journey I undertake in my work. My music now comes to life with musicians who are very physical performers and have a unique sound. They respond to my voice and character. That feeds my imagination and hopefully that of the audience as well. It feels great to share the power of live music in a venue like Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ'

Genevieve Murphy appeared at Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ in Amsterdam on 31st May 2024







pera is often taken far too seriously but it can be fun and it can be funny as is demonstrated by Opera Zuid's current double-bill, Rossini's La Scala di Seta and Il Signor Bruschino.

First impressions were of the magnificent decor. The all-white showroom-shiny marble kitchen designed by Agnes Hasun was very Dutch modern putting one in mind of Rotterdam's Cube Houses or those ubiquitous tall buildings with overhangs — although Rossini set the piece in Paris. There were lots of doors and hiding places, a prerequisite for any farsa comica.

As the overture to La Scala di Seta plays the chef arrives and starts preparing a meal as one by one we meet the characters. The story is one of frustrated lovers, they are secretly married but her guardian has plans for her to marry someone else. Giulia and Dorvil are forced to meet in secret every night with him arriving and leaving by the silk ladder. In this production he shins up and down a red silk sheet which is dangled out of the window. Of course, there is lots of subterfuge, people entering one door and leaving just in time through another. At one point poor Dorvil is forced to hide in the fridge but this does not seem to unduly cool his ardour. On another occasion he hides in a cupboard, forced to watch the amorous advances of Giulia's proposed husband. All good stuff and nicely done and I guess in farce anything goes but the representing one of the characters as a schoolboy, like a refugee from AC/DC left me a bit baffled.

Of course, love conquers all and the myriad complicated situations are happily resolved as *il cuoco* presents his gourmet dinner which unfortunately seems to have got a little burnt in all the excitement.

When the curtain rose for the evening's second offering, *Il Signor Bruschino*, I'm sure I wasn't the only one who had an overpowering sense of *déjà vu*. We were in the same kitchen with the same chef chopping the same celery and with the same singers, albeit

wearing different costumes. And the storyline was very similar too. Again the heroine, in this case Sofia, is being forced into an arranged marriage while her true lover, Florvill, schemes to impose himself by impersonating the proposed ne'er do well bridegroom, Mr. Bruschino fils, who has conveniently been arrested for not paying his hotel bill. The spanner in the works is Mr. Bruschino père who, although for some unexplained reason doesn't know his son, refuses to accept young Florvill. A suitably complex plot keeps the laughs coming and necessitates more head-scratching. As with La Scala di Seta things sort themselves out and everyone lives happily ever after.

There were some fine performances. The two ladies, Chelsea Bonagura as Sofia/Lucilla and Alexia Macbeth as Giulia/Marianna were both excellent but for me the best performance came from Edwin Fardini as Bruschino père. Roderik Povel uttered not one word but was never off-stage as the silent chef, bravely trying to prepare meals surrounded by chaos. The Philzuid orchestra under the baton of Sander Teepen provided spirited accompaniment.

This was an excellent production beautifully designed and cleverly directed by Marcos Darbyshire with some good singing and acting. However, I wasn't totally convinced by the wisdom of this buy-one-get-one-free production, they were really too similar. It wasn't quite *Groundhog Day* but I think in this case the whole made up less than its constituent parts. Alone, each would have been outstanding but by being presented as an exercise in compare and contrast, *Il Signor Bruschino* certainly lost some of its impact.

Nevertheless, a very entertaining evening, lots of fun and well worth seeing $\ \square$

Opera Zuid's *La Scala di Seta* and *Il Signor Bruschino* is on tour until 20th June

Not Only, But Also

Here's a selection of events that are taking place this month in the Rotterdam, Amsterdam and The Hague area and everywhere nearby or in between . . .



Until 11th September

PHOTOGRAPHY THROUGH THE LENS OF AI

at FOAM in Amsterdam



1st June – 7th July

CRAVING FOR BOIJMANS Museum building open for five weeks

at Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam



4th June – 6th July

THE GOOD, THE BAD and the ALGORITHM

at Boom Chicago, Amsterdam



Until 9th June

DELFT FRINGE FESTIVAL

at numerous locations in the city



6th & 12th June

ArtEZ presents **PROFESSIONAL CREATIONS '24**

Final performance of the Dance Artist course

at Nijmegen and Leiden



6th – 29th June

77th HOLLAND FESTIVAL

in Amsterdam



8th & 9th June

BLUE HEART by Ludicrum (Amateur production)

at Theater Kikker in Utrecht



15th June

DAY OF THE COMPOSER

around the country



22nd June – 10th November

NEW WAVE

at Stedelijk Museum Schiedam



26th, 28th & 30th June

THE RETURN OF ULYSSES TO HIS HOMELAND by Monteverdi/Kats-Chernin

at Amare in The Hague



30th June

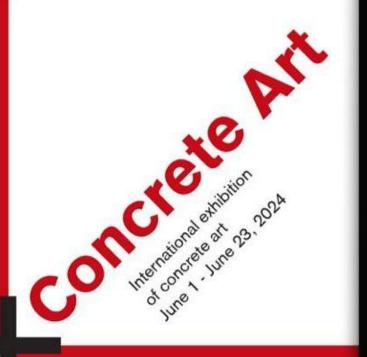
WARBOEL by Sounds Like Juggling

at Plein Theater in Amsterdam and then on tour



PULCHRI s t u d i o

Bob Bonies Marco Goldenbeld Eef de Graaf Manja Hazenberg Rik van Hazendonk Ewerdt Hilgemann Roland de Jong Orlando **Ditty Ketting** André van Lier Marus van der Made Tineke Porck Cees Post Anne Rose Regenboog Cees van Rutten Eddy Stikkelorum Gábor Szilasi Henk van Trigt Yumiko Yoneda





Kristel van Ballaer Beppe Bonetti José Bréval Christoph Dahlhausen Dave Donné István Haász Rupert Hartley Pavel Hayek Viktor Hulik Doris Marten Terje Roalkvam Rüdiger Seidt Ingela Skytte János Szász Saxon Takashi Suzuki Raf Thys

Martin Willing

Richard van der Aa

Pulchri Concrete Art

Mesdagzaal, Weissenbruchzaal en Hardenbergzaal | 1 t/m 23 juni 2024 | Opening: zaterdag 1 juni 2024 om 16:30 uur door Piet Augustijn, oud-conservator hedendaagse kunst Gorcums Museum, Gorinchem | Deze tentoonstelling is op 4 en 21 juni gesloten wegens een besloten bijeenkomst.

